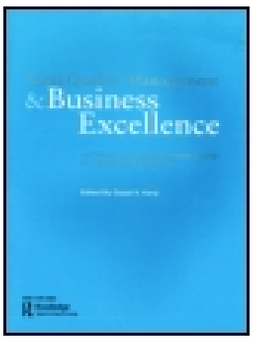

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Modelling leadership and team performance: the moderation of politics and leadership self-efficacy

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This study develops a research model that explains the development of team performance based on team reflexivity theory and social cognitive theory. In the model, team performance relates to considerate leadership and autocratic leadership indirectly via the mediation of team reflexivity. At the same time, politics and leadership self-efficacy are hypothesised as moderators in the model. Primary and secondary data were used via a two-wave investigation from three different sources for verifying our hypotheses. The team-level analyses show that team reflexivity mediates the positive relationship between considerate leadership and team performance. Politics positively moderates the relationship between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity. Leadership self-efficacy positively moderates the relationships between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity and between considerate leadership and team reflexivity. Finally, research implications based on our empirical results are discussed.

Keywords: considerate leadership; team performance; team reflexivity; politics; leadership self-efficacy

Introduction

Team leaders play a key role that influences team performance (Laureani & Antony, 2019; Larsson, 2017). Specifically, leadership has been considered a critical driver for a sales team's success in banking industry (Lin et al., 2019; Mekpor & Dartey-Baah, 2017). Literature has highlighted how diverse leadership attributes or qualities possessed by sales leaders boost team performance (Ahmad & Saidalavi, 2018; Teoman & Ulengin, 2018). Diverse leadership styles can be demonstrated simultaneously by the same sales leader (Awamleh et al., 2005). Understanding the actual effect of leadership across sales teams in banking industry requires a focus not only on different leadership styles but also on how these styles work together to jointly influence team performance (Keshavarz et al., 2013; Zaccaro, 2007). This is practically important because a sales leader often play various roles with diverse qualities that are interwoven in complicated ways to motivate his/her sales team (Belias & Koustelios, 2015; Zarb et al., 2017). For that reason, this study focuses on how different leadership styles influence the performance of sales teams in banking industry.

Scholars have widely discussed considerate leadership and autocratic leadership as important leadership styles for sales teams (Dorfman et al., 2012; Kenis, 1977; Lin et al.,

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2019). While considerate leadership is defined as a team leader's strong considerate tendency which is directed at developing quality social relationships with team members (Lin et al., 2019), autocratic leadership is defined as a team leader who makes a decision directly in a timely manner without seeking the advices of team members in advance (Chiu et al., 2018; De Cremer, 2007). It is important to examine these two leadership styles at the same time because they represent respectively a relationship-oriented style (i.e. concern for quality social connections) and a task-oriented style (i.e. concern for effective decision-making for tasks). Hoozée and Bruggeman (2010) have emphasized that such appropriate leadership styles as considerate leadership and autocratic leadership are indispensable for collective work. For example, some scholars (e.g. Homan & Greer, 2013) have revealed how considerate leadership influences diversity perceptions of team members, whereas others (Dorfman et al., 2012; Kenis, 1977) have found that autocratic leadership is related to job satisfaction and productivity. Extending the literature, this study attempts to explore the roles of these leadership styles in more depth.

A theory that is relevant to leadership and team performance is team reflexivity theory. According to team reflexivity theory, team reflexivity is defined as the extent to which team members reflect upon their collective goals, activities, and strategies, and possess adaptation under different circumstances (De Jong & Elfring, 2010). Influenced by leadership, team reflexivity is beneficial for the development of shared task representations that are conducive to team performance (van Ginkel et al., 2009). Drawing upon team reflexivity theory, this study takes into account considerate leadership and autocratic leadership in a single model setting to jointly explain team performance, which is rarely examined in the literature. Since previous research has suggested that teams tend to behave in habitual fashion instead of reflexive ways (Schippers et al., 2008), it is crucial to understand how leadership can effectively motivate team workers to become more reflexive (Schippers et al., 2008). Without any examination about the effects of different leadership styles on team reflexivity and eventually team performance, our understanding of all these factors will remain highly limited, and any initiatives taken by managers to enhance team performance will be unjustifiable and based on blind faith. To sum up, the purpose of this research is to examine the development of team performance from the perspective of leadership and explore if there exists potential moderators in the development.

This study differs from previous research in three important ways. First, this study complements prior leadership research that focused on a single type of leadership solely (e.g. Rast et al., 2013) or leadership based on individual-level perceptions (e.g. Bhatti et al., 2012; Lin, 2017; Vlachos et al., 2013) by assessing two different leadership styles simultaneously at a team-level of analysis. Second, although considerate leadership and autocratic leadership have been somewhat discussed in the literature, their potential moderators have been relatively understudied. For that reason, this study explores important moderators that may affect the influence of leadership. Third, this study is one of the few that examines how leadership influences team performance by using primary and secondary data together to perform empirical analysis. Much prior research has just used data on team performance that was self-reported by employees, resulting in questionable estimates about the accuracy of their performance outcome. To avoid the questionable estimates of team performance, this study collects data of team performance from the business records of sales teams for empirical testing. All in all, this study complements previous research by collecting primary and secondary data via a two-wave investigation from three different sources for verifying our hypotheses.

Research model and hypotheses

This study proposes a model that explains the development of team performance (see Figure 1). In the model, team performance indirectly relates to considerate leadership and autocratic leadership via the mediation of team reflexivity. Meanwhile, politics and leadership self-efficacy hypothetically moderate the effects of considerate leadership and autocratic leadership on team reflexivity. Note that the mediating role of team reflexivity is supported by the source-positional advantage-performance framework (Day & Wensley, 1988) because of team reflexivity as a positional advantage that mediates the influences of leaders' management skills on team project performance (Wu et al., 2019). The theoretical justifications for deriving our hypotheses are discussed in the followings.

According to team reflexivity theory, team performance is governed by various leadership mechanisms that work through team reflexivity (e.g. Lyubovnikova et al., 2017; Schippers et al., 2008). Teams with qualified professionals may still perform poorly if their leadership does not strengthen team reflexivity to engender effective team action processes (Hirst et al., 2004), indicating the mediating role of team reflexivity between leadership and team performance. Team reflexivity facilitates team performance because reflexivity involves team members' presenting their accounts of teamwork situations to figure out effective solutions to problems (Kakar, 2016). While justifying the positive effect of team reflexivity on team performance, team reflexivity theory has also suggested such reflexivity as being fostered and shaped by leadership (Schippers et al., 2001). Following the theoretical aspect, this study contributes to the literature by evaluating considerate leadership and autocratic leadership as antecedents of team reflexivity, which has not been yet validated in the literature.

Autocratic leadership can be beneficial in competitive environment where there is little time to consult with many people (De Cremer, 2007; Stewart & Manz, 1995). Although autocratic leadership may sometimes cause individuals' resentment, the literature has found that autocratic leadership can foster team psychological safety (De Hoogh et al., 2015) and positively influence teamwork motivation (Khuong & Hoang, 2015). Although autocratic leadership is not always welcome by employees, the literature has suggested that autocratic leadership style is useful and beneficial in small groups, teams, or enterprises (Dulcic & Raguz, 2006). For example, Kingshott (2006) has revealed that autocratic leadership is effective and advantageous within the context of police service delivery. In fact, previous research has indicated that non-autocratic leadership can be often overturned – specifically when workers are self-conceptually uncertain (Rast et al., 2013).

From a task-oriented perspective, autocratic leadership pushes team members to focus on assigned work and boost their motivation of reflecting upon their truly important objectives (De Hoogh et al., 2015). A recent study (Njue et al., 2017) suggests that autocratic leadership helps yield positive outcomes, enhance morale, and eventually increase productivity. Accordingly, autocratic leadership positively motivates team members to ponder and reflect on teamwork (Antonakis et al., 2004), increasing team reflexivity to undertake critical actions and ultimately improving team performance. In summary, the first hypothesis is derived as below.

> H1: Team reflexivity mediates the positive relationship between autocratic leadership and team performance.

Considerate leadership is socially relationship oriented and can enhance subordinates' satisfaction with their leader (Mulki et al., 2009). Recent literature has revealed that considerate leadership is positively related to work engagement (Glasø et al., 2018) and reflection

upon budget (Kohlmeyer et al., 2014). Team workers who work for a considerate leader view the leader as communicative, understanding, and sensitive to their needs (Harris & Ogbonna, 2001), thus being inspired to overtly reflect on, and communicate about collective goals and strategies (i.e. reflexivity). A relevant study by Rowold (2011) has found that considerate leaders help workers understand tasks and objectives, adapt themselves to different environmental circumstances (e.g. reflexivity), which eventually facilitate their performance. In summary, considerate leadership is likely to boost team performance indirectly through the increased team reflexivity, leading to the following hypothesis.

H2: Team reflexivity mediates the positive relationship between considerate leadership and team performance.

There exists an interaction between leadership styles and politics because of their contradictory notions that clash with each other (Jamil & Naseer, 2011). Specifically, leadership is defined as the ability to influence the motivation or competence of individuals from a collective perspective (Baig et al., 2019; Humphrey, 2012), while politics is characterised by individual self-interest rather than collective benefits (Jamil & Naseer, 2011). Politics is likely to flourish in uncertain and ambiguous teamwork environment without strong leadership (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). As a result, the relationship between leadership and its direct outcome (i.e. team reflexivity) is likely disturbed and moderated by politics. The relational strength between leadership and team reflexivity may change, depending on politics. Politics is defined in this study as the perception about the actions taken by team members to develop, obtain, and utilise social influences (or other resources) to acquire their preferred self-interest outcome (Lin et al., 2018). Examples of team politics include discrediting one's coworker, being unwilling to share previous experience to improve further collective actions, and fighting against one another to protect their personal profit that conflicts with team benefit (Lin et al., 2019; Poon, 2003).

Politics is likely to enhance the effect of leadership on team reflexivity. As politics reduces honesty and morale (Agrawal, 2013), team members who encounter stronger politics tend to count on leaders more strongly as psychological compensation to ensure their teaming processes and progress. Politics increases the relative confusion of the teaming environment and strengthens team workers' perception that coworkers' behaviour is likely driven by self-interest, with little care for others' well-being (Kacmar et al., 2011). Under such circumstances, team leaders are viewed as a hope for team workers to clarify confusion and bring things back to order. As a result, team workers become more sensitive to leadership styles (such as autocratic leadership and considerate leadership) and their reactions to leadership can be elicited more strongly.

Based on the above theoretical rationales, this study hypothesises politics as a moderator for the relationships between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity and between considerate leadership and team reflexivity. Given stronger politics, the effect of autocratic leadership on team reflexivity becomes larger because team members tend to count on autocratic leadership to reduce uncertainty (Rast et al., 2013) so as to alleviate the disturbances or confusions caused by politics. This phenomena is partially supported by social hierarchy theory arguing that autocratic leadership positively facilitates morale and performance through the development of a psychologically appealing, hierarchical environment of security and predictability in the team (De Hoogh et al., 2015). Analogously, in case of stronger politics, the effect of considerate leadership on team reflexivity is likely amplified because such leadership that helps workers deal with teamwork-related and personal problems (Brown et al., 2014) can alleviate their uncomfortableness caused by politics. Collectively, the hypotheses regarding the moderation of politics are derived as below.

H3: Politics moderates the relationship between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity, such that the relationship is stronger when politics is higher.

H4: Politics moderates the relationship between considerate leadership and team reflexivity, such that the relationship is stronger when politics is higher.

Leadership self-efficacy is likely to hoist the effect of leadership on team reflexivity. Leadership self-efficacy is defined as the perceived capabilities of a team leader to perform functions necessary to accomplish leadership behaviour, which involves belief in his/her overall competence in leading his/her team (Kane et al., 2002). Based on the social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977, 1997), leadership with strong leadership self-efficacy are inclined to make great efforts to fulfil their leadership roles and to persevere longer when applying specific leadership styles (Ng et al., 2008). As a result, such leaders are more effective in exerting and enhancing the influence of their considerate leadership and/or autocratic leadership to a large extent.

Leadership self-efficacy plays a catalyser or accelerator that interacts with considerate leadership and/or autocratic leadership. More specifically, since leadership self-efficacy can be used to predict leaders' behaviour and determinations (Rosch et al., 2014), an autocratic leader with greater confidence in his/her own leading capability is more easily understood by team members as having made determinations to highly direct the team (i.e. autocratic leadership), further amplifying the effect of autocratic leadership on team reflexivity. Similarly, a considerate leader who shows greater confidence in his/her own leading capability is more easily recognised by team members (Anderson et al., 2008) as having made attempts at supporting and caring for them, consequently enlarging the positive effect of considerate leadership on team reflexivity. All in all, the hypotheses regarding the moderation of leadership self-efficacy are derived as below.

H5: Leadership self-efficacy moderates the relationship between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity, such that the relationship is stronger when leadership self-efficacy is higher.

H6: Leadership self-efficacy moderates the relationship between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity, such that the relationship is stronger when leadership self-efficacy is higher.

Methods

Subjects and procedures

The research hypotheses derived in this study were tested using two-wave data collection from three data sources in a leading bank holding company which was the largest bank holding company in Taiwan. Sales teams were investigated in this study because previous research has suggested leadership be a major issue of sales teams (Weitz & Bradford, 1999; Wong et al., 2015). To enhance the participants' willingness to fill out research questionnaires, this study conducted its field survey anonymously. We also assured the participants that data collected from them would be used only for aggregated statistical analyses and any individuals' response would not be disclosed.

To successfully obtain the team-level data, this study prepared one set of survey instrument for each team. More specifically, every large envelope contained five small envelops with questionnaires inside for each team. In the large envelope, four small envelops marked 'Member' were randomly provided to team members and one small envelop marked 'Leader' was provided to the team leader. Every small envelope would be sealed with double-sided tape after its inside questionnaires were filled out by a participant. After all the five small envelopes from the same team were collected and put back to the large envelope they belonged to, the large envelope was then sealed and delivered to the researchers of this study.

Of the 500 questionnaires distributed to 100 teams (i.e. four questionnaires for members individually each team and one questionnaire for their leader), a total of 352 usable questionnaires from 73 teams were returned (i.e. 73 questionnaires from leaders and 279 questionnaires from members). A total of 73 team leaders included 32 male leaders (43.84%), 38 leaders at the age of 40 or older (52.05%), and 46 leaders with job experience of 10 years or above (63.01%). At the same time, a total of 279 team members included 98 male members (35.13%), 107 members at the age of 40 or older (38.35%), and 131 members with job experience of 10 years or above (46.95%).

Measures

The variables in this study were measured using 5-point Likert scales refined from previous literature (see Appendix A). Content validity of the scales was assessed by three management researchers in academia. Before its actual field survey, this study used firstly a focus group of industry practitioners and secondly a pilot survey to ensure the readability and reliability of the scales (e.g. Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015; He et al., 2014). The pilot survey data, conducted with a sample of working professionals excluded from the subsequent actual survey, was analyzed using exploratory factor analysis. The items with poor loadings or cross-loadings in the pilot test were removed from the questionnaire.

In the first-wave data collection, participants were invited voluntarily to take part in the field survey. Team members measured autocratic leadership, considerate leaderships, and politics, while team leaders measured leadership self-efficacy, team reflexivity, and social desirability. Three months later, this study conducted the second-wave data collection by obtaining team performance data from the department of human resource management (HRM), which objectively rated each team based on its sales completion rate.

Two important precautionary measures in this study were used to alleviate the threat of common method variances (CMV). First, social desirability that could generate biases in self-reported investigations (Williamson et al., 2002) was taken into account as a control variable in this study. Second, data collection from three different sources at two different points of time (i.e. team members at Time 1, leaders at Time 1, and the HRM department evaluating team performance evaluation at Time 2) can substantially mitigate the threat of CMV. To sum up, the precautionary measures adopted by this study were much more powerful and effective than any post-hoc statistical remedies used for assessing CMV (Lin et al., 2012; Lindell & Whitney, 2001; Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Indeed, preventing CMV actually counts on data collection from different sources (as a precautionary measure) rather than simply the use of statistical remedies for detecting CMV afterward.

Data analysis

This study conducted data analyses with the following steps. First, data were analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess reliability and validity. Second, intraclass correlations were verified to support the aggregation of responses to form the team-level data. Finally, team-level hierarchical moderated regression analysis was performed to test hypotheses. Empirical test results of this study were presented next.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

Data from team leaders and those from team members were analyzed respectively by confirmatory factor analysis. The test results (see Tables 1 and 2) exhibited that goodness-of-fit

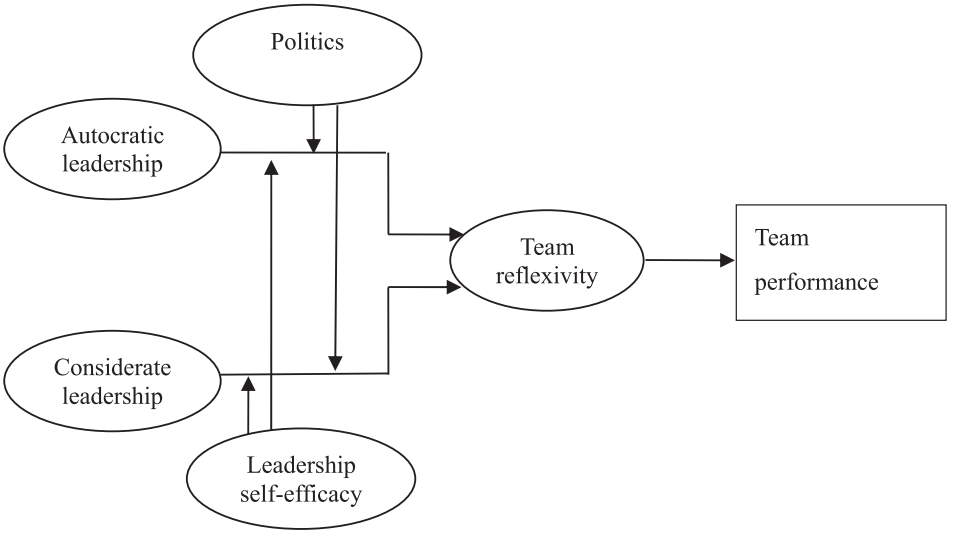

Figure 1. Conceptual model.

Table 1. Confirmatory factor analysis of the data from team leaders ($N_1 = 73$).

Construct	Indicators	Standardized loading	AVE	Cronbach's α
Team reflexivity	CR1	0.92 (t = 9.93)	0.77	0.93
	CR2	0.87 (t = 9.02)		
	CR3	0.92 (t = 9.92)		
	CR4	0.80 (t = 8.02)		
Leadership self-efficacy	SE1	0.83 (t = 8.44)	0.72	0.93
	SE2	0.80 (t = 8.07)		
	SE3	0.80 (t = 7.97)		
	SE4	0.93 (t = 10.24)		
	SE5	0.90 (t = 9.60)		

Goodness-of-fit indices: $\chi^2_{26} = 54.66$ ($p < 0.001$); NNFI = 0.93; NFI = 0.91; CFI = 0.95; RMR = 0.05; Bollen Non-normed Index Delta2 = 0.95.

indices of CFA met the required rule-of-thumb levels of acceptance. Specifically, the figures of NFI, NNFI, CFI, and Bollen Non-normed Index Delta2 were all larger than 0.9, supporting good fit (e.g. Cole & Chancellor, 2009). The RMR was smaller than 0.05, suggesting good fit. In summary, these goodness-of-fit indices met the basic criteria for a good model (Jaramillo et al., 2006). In addition, convergent validity was supported according to three criteria below (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). First, all factor loadings were statistically significant at $p < 0.001$ (see Tables 1 and 2). Second, the average variance extracted (AVE) of each variable exceeded 0.50. Third, the reliability of each variable exceeded 0.80.

Discriminant validity was confirmed by chi-square difference tests. Since the chi-square difference statistics for all pairs of constructs in this study met the overall significance level to 0.01 or lower (see Tables 3 and 4), consequently supporting discriminant validity. Overall, the statistical test results indicated that measurement instruments used by this study were methodologically adequate.

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis of the data from team members ($N_2 = 279$).

Construct	Indicators	Standardized loading	AVE	Cronbach's α
Autocratic leadership	AL1	0.93 (t = 20.50)	0.84	0.96
	AL2	0.91 (t = 19.74)		
	AL3	0.93 (t = 20.59)		
	AL4	0.91 (t = 19.61)		
	AL5	0.91 (t = 19.82)		
Considerate leadership	CL1	0.90 (t = 19.35)	0.81	0.95
	CL2	0.93 (t = 20.55)		
	CL3	0.91 (t = 19.87)		
	CL4	0.92 (t = 20.02)		
	CL5	0.86 (t = 18.04)		
Politics	PO1	0.90 (t = 19.12)	0.81	0.93
	PO2	0.93 (t = 20.15)		
	PO3	0.88 (t = 18.60)		

Goodness-of-fit indices: $\chi^2_{62} = 249.41$ ($p < 0.001$); NNFI = 0.94; NFI = 0.94; CFI = 0.95; RMR = 0.03; Bollen Non-normed Index Delta2 = 0.95.

Table 3. Chi-square difference tests on the data from team leaders ($N_1 = 73$).

	$\chi^2_{26} = 54.66$ (unconstrained model)	
Construct pair	χ^2_{27} (constrained model)	χ^2 difference
(Team reflexivity, Leadership self-efficacy)	178.36***	123.70

***Significant at the 0.001 overall significance level by using the Bonferroni method.

Table 4. Chi-square difference tests on the data from team members ($N_2 = 279$).

	$\chi^2_{62} = 249.41$ (unconstrained model)	
Construct pair	χ^2_{63} (constrained model)	χ^2 difference
(Autocratic leadership, Considerate leadership)	1451.59***	1202.18
(Autocratic leadership, Politics)	580.80***	331.39
(Considerate leadership, Politics)	849.65***	600.24

***Significant at the 0.001 overall significance level by using the Bonferroni method.

Table 5. Inter-rater reliability.

Construct	ICC_1	ICC_2	r_{wg}
Autocratic leadership	0.40	0.72	0.88
Considerate leadership	0.49	0.78	0.96
Politics	0.27	0.59	0.78

Note 1: The ICC_1 values were close to or larger than the recommended level of 0.12 (James, 1982).
Note 2: The ICC_2 values were close to or larger than the recommended level of 0.60 (Baruch & Lin, 2012).
Note 3: The rwg values were close to or larger than the recommended level of 0.70 (James et al., 1984).

Results

After the data aggregation of this study was performed and statistically justified (see Table 5), team-level data were analyzed with hierarchical moderated regression analysis to test the hypotheses of this study. To reduce unpredictable biases caused by leaders' traits, this study included major control variables such as their gender, age, experience, tenure, and social desirability. Table 6 demonstrated hierarchical regression models (i.e. Models 1-5) and their test results. Models 1–3 were used to show the indirect effects of leadership via the mediation of team reflexivity, while Models 4 and 5 were used to assess the moderation of politics and leadership self-efficacy.

In Table 6, this study first included team reflexivity with six control variables in Model 1 to explain team performance, revealing that team reflexivity significantly related to team

Table 6. Team-level hierarchical regression analysis.

	Model 1 Team performance	Model 2 Team performance	Model 3 Team reflexivity	Model 4 Team reflexivity	Model 5 Team reflexivity
Control variables:					
Gender of the leader (M/F)	0.08	0.07	−0.01	0.14	−0.10
Age of the leader (years)	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	−0.01
Experience of the leader in industry (years)	−0.01	−0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Tenure of the leader in the team (years)	−0.01	−0.01	0.01	0.01	−0.01
Social desirability	−0.06	−0.06	0.23	0.19	0.07
Mediator:					
Team reflexivity	0.22*	0.24*			
Antecedents:					
Autocratic leadership		−0.04	0.09	−0.46	−1.33*
Considerate leadership		−0.04	0.61**	−0.20	−1.91**
Moderators:					
Politics				−2.44*	
Leadership self-efficacy					−2.73**
Interaction terms:					
Politics * Autocratic leadership				0.33*	
Politics * Considerate leadership				0.28	
Leadership self-efficacy * Autocratic leadership					0.35*
Leadership self-efficacy * Considerate leadership					0.62**
Adj R^2	0.02	0.02	0.38	0.58	0.58

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$.

performance with the positive coefficient of 0.22 ($p < 0.05$). Note that including these control variables was helpful for accurately assessing the influence of proposed research factors on team performance by eliminating the unexpected influence of leader demographics. For example, previous research found that performance would be influenced by leader gender (e.g. Lemoine & Blum, 2019) which was thus controlled in this study. In Model 2, autocratic leadership and considerate leadership were added along with team reflexivity together to explain team performance. The test result showed that the significant effect of team reflexivity remained significant but autocratic leadership and considerate leadership both insignificantly related to team performance (i.e. both leadership styles did not have a direct effect on team performance). The analysis in Model 2 was presented to confirm the full mediation of team reflexivity. Literature indicated that if the mediating variable (i.e. team reflexivity) was a full mediator instead of a partial mediator, then the association between the antecedents (i.e. autocratic leadership and considerate leadership) and their outcome (i.e. team performance) should be insignificant given the significance of the mediator (i.e. team reflexivity) in the same model. In this study, the full mediation of team reflexivity was supported in the test result of Model 2. In other words, the effects of autocratic leadership and considerate leadership were insignificant when the significance of team reflexivity existed in the same model. This phenomenon suggested that team reflexivity was indeed a key mediator that fully mediated the indirect relationship between team performance and its antecedents. In Model 3, this study included autocratic leadership and considerate leadership to explain team reflexivity. Autocratic leadership insignificantly related to team reflexivity, but considerate leadership significantly related to team reflexivity with the positive coefficient of 0.61 ($p < 0.01$). In summary of the test results of Models 1-3, team reflexivity did not mediate the relationship between autocratic leadership and team performance (H1 was not supported), but team reflexivity significantly mediated the positive relationship between considerate leadership and team performance (H2 was supported).

In Model 4, politics and its interactions with autocratic leadership and considerate leadership were added to explain team reflexivity. The test results showed that politics moderated the relationship between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity with the positive coefficient of 0.33 ($p < 0.05$) (H3 was supported) but did not moderate the relationship between considerate leadership and team reflexivity (H4 was not supported). In Model 5, leadership self-efficacy and its interactions with autocratic leadership and considerate leadership were added to explain team reflexivity. The test results showed that leadership self-

Table 7. Empirical results of hypotheses.

Hypotheses	Results
H1: Team reflexivity mediates the negative relationship between autocratic leadership and team performance.	Not supported
H2: Team reflexivity mediates the positive relationship between considerate leadership and team performance.	Supported
H3: Politics positively moderates the relationship between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity.	Supported
H4: Politics positively moderates the relationship between considerate leadership and team reflexivity.	Not supported
H5: Leadership self-efficacy positively moderates the relationship between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity.	Supported
H6: Leadership self-efficacy positively moderates the relationship between considerate leadership and team reflexivity.	Supported

efficacy moderated the relationships between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity with the positive coefficient of 0.35 ($p < 0.05$) (H5 was supported) and between considerate leadership and team reflexivity with the positive coefficient of 0.62 ($p < 0.01$) (H6 was supported). Table 7 summarised the empirical results of hypotheses.

Discussion

This study empirically finds how team reflexivity plays a key mediating role in the development of team performance. A majority of research has linked various leadership styles (e.g. transformational leadership, servant leadership) to team performance (e.g. Chiniara & Bentein, 2018; Sun et al., 2014) but has rarely examined how team reflexivity mediates the relationship between our proposed leadership styles and team performance. In addition, this study clarifies the relationship between leadership styles and team reflexivity in depth by assessing the moderation of politics and leadership efficacy. Based on its empirical findings, this study presents the theoretical and managerial implications in the followings.

Theoretical implications

This study has two major theoretical implications. First, this study conceptualised two distinct kinds of leadership as major determinants of team performance from the perspective of team reflexivity. Such a theoretical conceptualisation built upon leadership not only broadens the boundary of team reflexivity beyond the literature that considers team reflexivity as an antecedent for team outcomes (e.g. Schippers et al., 2015) but also shows the practical status quo of leadership in a team. Understanding these two leadership styles contributes to leadership theories (e.g. Amanchukwu et al., 2015) regarding how to go a long way towards fine-tuning team reflexivity. The literature has argued that there exists no single type of leadership that can completely influence employees' performance and creativity (Rosing et al., 2011), and thus a combination of two complementary leadership styles in this study helps explain a major proportion of variance in team performance (Zacher et al., 2016). The finding of this study regarding considerate leadership corroborates the leadership theory of consideration in which consideration is linked to follower motivation and group performance (Judge et al., 2004). Specifically, this study provides additional evidence for theory on considerate leadership that facilitates the development of followers' competencies by inspiring their discretion to learn and introspect (Schweitzer, 2014).

Second, this research incorporated the self-efficacy aspect of social cognitive theory into the framework of team performance in team reflexivity theory. Specifically, this study theorised and validated leadership self-efficacy as a moderator between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity and between considerate leadership and team reflexivity. Analogous with the theoretical framework of Kauppila et al. (2018), our findings support nomological justifications that leadership self-efficacy can interact with other factors to facilitate positive workplace outcomes in the organisations. Besides, our rationales regarding the moderation of leadership self-efficacy are compatible with prior theoretical discussion about leadership self-efficacy as a moderator to stereotype activation in the literature (Hoyt, 2005). In conclusion, this study offers valuable insights into how leadership self-efficacy exerts positive moderation in the formation of team reflexivity. The finding of this study regarding leadership self-efficacy corroborates the cascading or diffusion mechanism of leadership self-efficacy in social networks (Balkundi & Kilduff, 2006). That is, a highly efficacious team leader is likely to create similarly higher levels of efficacy among their team followers through cascading effects across social network linkages (Hannah et al., 2008).

Managerial implications

This work introduces useful managerial implications for teaming practices. Its finding regarding the positive influence of considerate leadership on team reflexivity indicates that management trainees (i.e. candidates of team leaders) should learn to express concern and respect for team members, watch out for their welfare, and show support and appreciation (i.e. strong considerate leadership) so as to inspire team reflexivity. Therefore, the leadership learning interventions of behaviour modelling in clinical psychology should be implemented to produce positive change of considerate leadership. After all, many leadership skills can be taught, and thus to some extent the perspectives of considerate leadership can be appropriately developed and strengthened through effective training and education (e.g. Doh, 2003).

Team leaders should learn that team performance is directly motivated by team reflexivity. Without periodically measuring the degree of team reflexivity, team leaders may act blindly to pursue trendy management strategies while ignoring the decline of team reflexivity. In a case of weak team reflexivity, team leaders are unlikely to make good use of their resources in teaming contexts for improving team performance. For that reason, team reflexivity can serve as a check point of ongoing teamwork and should be regularly promoted as a prioritized issue in a team. Team leaders should act as active considerate leaders to inspire team members' reflexivity in their coordinated competencies, consequently increasing team performance.

This study highlights the role of politics as a contextual variable moderating the relationship between autocratic leadership and team performance. As politics cannot help provide team members with a clear sense of how they deal with each other and may distract their attention in teamwork, autocratic leadership can come to a rescue for positively motivating the team members to stay focused on achieving team goals. Therefore, when politics strongly prevails in a team, team leaders may appropriately use autocratic leadership to clearly guide team members who may be confused by politics. By demonstrating autocratic leadership, team leaders are likely to help team members conserve cognitive resources and mental effort to accomplish teamwork without having to invest much psychological effort on within-team political judgment.

The finding of this study regarding the significant moderation of leadership self-efficacy suggests that leadership self-efficacy is a vital accelerator that can positively leverage the weights of both autocratic leadership and considerate leadership for the improvement of team reflexivity. A team leader with weak leadership self-efficacy is just like a ship without a rudder, drifting aimlessly. Such a leader is unlikely to guide team members (Van Swol & Sniezek, 2005; Zarnoth & Sniezek, 1997) and be viewed as reliable and competent (Sah et al., 2013). As a result, the effect of autocratic leadership and considerate leadership on team reflexivity cannot be enhanced by such a leader. To strengthen leadership self-efficacy, leadership development programmes designed for a leader should be implemented by identifying barriers the leader encounters and providing proper support to help overcome the barriers successfully. After having more experiences of tackling difficulties and being successful, the leader's self-efficacy is strengthened.

In summary, this study shows how leadership is critical for team performance. We have demonstrated a major issue concerning two emerging leadership styles that deserve the close attention of practitioners and scholars interested in group dynamics and team management. Note that team performance cannot be arbitrarily enhanced by an immediate decree of management strategy, but rather it is likely achieved after proper leadership is demonstrated at the right time by taking into account politics and leadership self-efficacy. By learning

these two different kinds of leadership styles simultaneously, team leaders are able to tailor a variety of teamwork rules or tactics to promote team reflexivity so as to increase team performance.

Limitations and future research

This study has two noticeable limitations. The first limitation is its generalizability, due to the highly delimited nature of the sample firm from banking industry in Taiwan. The theoretical inferences drawn from such a sample and their empirical results may not be fully generalisable to team workers from high-tech industry or manufacturing industry from Western countries. Second, due to its theoretical foundation based on team reflexivity theory and social cognitive theory, this study did not address economic or cultural variables (e.g. moral hazard, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity, and so on) for justifying team performance. To sum up, future researchers can investigate a variety of work teams across different industries and countries, add to current knowledge by bridging multiple theories (e.g. coopetition theory, social exchange theory, social identification theory) and observing team workers and leaders longitudinally so that the genuine effects of leadership on team reflexivity and team performance can be accurately estimated.

Conclusion

This study aims to examine how and through what mediating and moderating mechanisms both autocratic leadership and considerate leadership influence the development of team performance. The empirical team-level analyses in this study reveal that team reflexivity mediates the positive association between considerate leadership and team performance. Politics positively moderates the association between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity. Leadership self-efficacy positively moderates the associations between autocratic leadership and team reflexivity and between considerate leadership and team reflexivity. By learning and understanding the findings and implications of this study, scholars and practitioners will be able to effectively leverage leadership styles, politics, and leadership self-efficacy to achieve team performance goals.

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Appendix A. Measurement items

Factors measured by team leaders

Team reflexivity (Source: Lyubovnikova et al., 2017)

1. Our team often reviews its objectives.
2. Our team often discussed about the methods used by our team to get the job done.
3. We regularly discuss whether the team is working effectively.
4. Our team often reviews its getting the job done.

Leadership self-efficacy (Source: Lin et al., 2012)

1. I am confident in my leadership ability.
2. I am confidence in leading my team to correct the mistakes in our work.
3. I am confidence in showing my good leadership
4. I am confidence in achieving leadership performance.
5. I am confidence in leading my team to operate effectively.

Factors measured by team members

Autocratic leadership (Source: De Cremer et al., 2004)

1. Our team leader takes decisions in an autocratic manner.
2. Our team leader often pushes his/her personal opinion.
3. Our team leader seldom accommodates new ideas.
4. Our team leader seldom explains his/her actions.
5. Our team leader's decision-making is often arbitrary.

Considerate leadership (Source: Homan & Greer, 2013)

1. Our team leader helps employees with their personal problems.
2. My team leader is friendly and easy to approach.
3. Our team leader is considerate of people.
4. Our team leader takes actions to support subordinates.
5. Our team leader can accommodate different thoughts of others.

Politics (Source: Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004)

1. There are few members in our team who always get things their way because no one wants to challenge them.
2. Members in our team attempt to build themselves up by tearing others down
3. I have seen changes made in policies here that only serve the purposes of a few individuals, not our team.